

Arlington Conservation Commission
Minutes
March 2, 2017

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex. Present were Chair Nathaniel Stevens, Commissioners Mike Nonni, Charles Tirone, Curt Connors, Susan Chapnick, David White, and Janine White, and Associate Member Catherine Garnett. Also present were Bruce Wheltle, Mary Murray, Town Engineer Bill Copithorne, Jon N. Bonsall (AGT/Keegan Werlin), Ivana Pejatovic (Algonquin Gas Trans), Gene Crouch (VHB), Valerie Moran (MWRA) and Rich Kirby (LEC).

7:30pm Commission Business:

Mr. Stevens explained that due to an omission in posting the legal notice about tonight's meeting, the proposed hearing for Algonquin J-1 Systems Pipeline would be a Working Session.

Mr. Stevens also introduced former Commission Associate Member Eileen Coleman as the new temporary Conservation Administrator for Arlington. Ms. Coleman will work 10-20 hours per week for the Town with baseline hours being 9am-12pm Monday and Tuesday and 12pm to 7pm on Thursdays (on days without evening Commission meetings), 12pm to 5pm and 7pm to end of meeting on the Thursdays when the Conservation Commission meets.

Meeting minutes from the previous meeting were discussed and edited. DWhite/Connors motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes from 2/16/17 with edits; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Chapnick and Ms. Coleman will revise Orders of Conditions for 18 Nourse St. and Mystic Riverfront Restoration project to reflect items discussed at prior meeting as reflected in edits to minutes of February 16, 2017.

7:45 pm Notice of Intent - Mystic Riverfront Restoration Project DEP #91-0284
(*Mystic River Parkway at Park Street*) (continued from 2/17/2017))

Documents considered:

Draft Order of Conditions, WPA Form 5 plus Special Conditions #21-40

The Commission members discussed the draft Order of Conditions distributed by Susan Chapnick. Mr. White questioned Special Condition #39; it was agreed a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and DCR would be sent to the Commission.

The wording of the Findings section was also discussed. Agreed the wording in the last paragraph on page 2 would be changed to "while there will be some temporary effects upon the interests of the Wetlands Protection Act or the resource area values of the Arlington Wetlands Bylaw, the conditions imposed will protect the habitat values." Ms. Chapnick pointed out that the revised drawings showed the silt fence in more detail.

Assistant Town Engineer Bill Copithorne confirmed that he had spoken to DCR and no changes were proposed to the design plan as presented in the NOI.

DWhite/Tirone moved to closed the hearing; Ms. White and Mr. Connors abstained; motion passed unanimously.

Tirone/DWhite motioned to issue the Town of Arlington Order of Conditions under the conditions discussed; motion passed unanimously; Ms. White and Mr. Connors abstained. The Order was signed.

8:00 pm **Working Session** - Algonquin J-1 Systems pipeline (under intersection of Mystic River and Alewife Brook)

Mr. Stevens again apologized for the snafu in the newspaper notice not being posted, requiring the postponement of the hearing on the Notice of Intent to March 16, 2017, at 8pm.

Gene Crouch from VHB introduced colleagues Jon Bonsal and Ivana Pejatovic, representing Spectra Energy Partners.

Documents supporting the Working Session included:

Notice of Intent application, Algonquin J-1 System Mystic river Crossing Replacement, dated February 10, 2017.

Plans DWG.: JSYS-A-1001, DWG.: JSYS-A-1002, DWG.: JSYS-A-1003

Mr. Crouch described the proposed project. An anomaly discovered in the 24" gas pipeline running under the Mystic River requires that that portion of the pipeline be replaced. Replacement from above ground was considered and rejected as it would have greater impacts to wetland resource areas. Algonquin proposes to use directional drilling to insert the pipe horizontally from the Somerville side of the riverbank, for a final depth of 40-45' beneath the riverbed, emerging on the Arlington side. In the course of multiple passes, a 36" hole will be reamed out. The drill string will be inserted going from west to east and the pipe will be pulled back east to west in 200' sections that will be welded in place before entering the hole. The existing pipe will be cut and tied into either end of the new line using trenching. The new line will undergo hydrostatic testing before being brought into commission. The old section will be filled with grout, capped and left in place. The whole process would take 3 months.

The southern portion of the proposed work site is in Somerville, the Northern portion in Medford and the western portion in Arlington. In Arlington, the project is in riverfront and the 100-foot buffer zone, just outside the 25-foot zone, all DCR-owned land. Geotechnical borings revealed the pipe will be in bedrock the whole distance beneath the Mystic River.

Mr. Crouch, in response to a question about vegetation removal, stated that they are working with DCR on this; some small caliper trees may have to be removed but they are trying to avoid big trees. He also confirmed a more detailed Erosion Control Plan, which will show tree removal locations and dewatering locations, would be available for the Hearing.

There could be inadvertent releases of bentonite mud, a naturally occurring product (MSDS sheet would be provided), used in the drilling. Though unlikely, there could be a release of bentonite due to high pressure; small fissures may develop in the drill hole. If this occurs within the bedrock, it is likely that no surface release would be seen; however, if it occurs at an exit hole on land, it will be contained using haybales and drilling will stop until the leak is fixed. Ivana Pejatovic confirmed that they will be monitoring the pressure; if there is a pressure drop, which indicates a leak, the operators can anticipate a release and would be prepared to deal with that within 30 to 60 minutes. The composition of the mud can be changed and also would harden somewhat when drilling is stopped. If mud is released it would be cleaned by vacuuming or other means, and as part of agreement with DCR, Algonquin would have to restore DCR land to "as found." The drill cuttings would be filtered out (at the Somerville end) and water and bentonite reused. At the end of the project the drill slurry would be hauled away in roll-offs to a Subtitle D facility.

Mary Murray, neighbor, mentioned that many of the small trees are new and expressed concern that pressure would affect abutters or the bridge. Mr. Crouch confirmed that trees would be replaced or replanted and that the project was designed to avoid the bridge and all utilities and said that neighbors would not feel vibrations from the directional drill.

For the hearing at the next meeting, Commission members requested:

1. Pictures of the Arlington side of the site
2. List of trees to be removed and replacement plantings
3. List of construction equipment to be used on the Arlington side of site

8:15 pm Discussion – Draft Order of Conditions - **18 Nourse Street DEP #91-0281**

Documents considered:

Draft Order of Conditions, WPA Form 5 plus Special Conditions #21-43

The Commission discussed the draft Order of Conditions produced by Mr. Tirone and Ms. Coleman. It was agreed that the following changes would be made:

Under Findings, add “AURA and” to resource areas identified.

In the 3rd to last paragraph, add “the commission determined that there were no other reasonable alternatives to the placement of the house.”

Condition 38, add “AURA” before Riverfront Area.”

Condition 38(e), change wording to indicate height of plantings rather than distance from house or each other.

Conditions 40, 41 & 42, add :”This shall be a continuing condition.”

Condition 43, change the “or” to “and.”

Chapnick/Nonni motioned to approve the Order of Conditions with edits; vote carried. Connors abstained.

8:40 pm **MWRA Meter 130 Replacement, Ridge St., Winchester**

Documents considered:

Letter describing the proposed MWRA Meter 130 Replacement project dated March 1, 2017,

Figure 1, Overall Project Locus,

Figure 2, Project Topographical Plan of land,

Figure 3, Wetland Resource Map.

Valerie Moran described MWRA’s proposal to upgrade a meter due to lack of pressure in some homes in the area. Most of the work would be in the paved area of Ridge St. area in Winchester with some in the Forest St. area in Arlington. MWRA will lay a 24” pipe less than 50 feet from Dunster Lane to the Town Line, 3 valves will be moved to the Arlington side and a forest green meter cabinet will be installed where an existing hatch is located. That hatch is close to Conservation Land. They will have straw wattles and will have straw bales if needed. In response to Chuck Tirone’s questions Ms. Moran agreed to produce BMPs or an O&M.

The following conditions were drafted:

- Site shall be swept daily and all dirt from any excavations will be trucked off-site daily
- Silt sacks shall be used in storm drains,
- Straw wattles shall be installed between the structure where the meter box will go and the fence,
- A pre-activity meeting and inspection shall be scheduled with the Conservation Administrator.

Tirone/Connors motioned to issue MWRA an Administrative Approval under the conditions discussed above; motion passed unanimously.

9:00 pm **Request for Emergency Certification – trees at 88 Coolidge Road**

Documents supporting the Request for Emergency Certification:

Emergency Request for the removal of two trees at 88 Coolidge Road, dated February 28, 2017, including photographs of the trees,

A report from the Tree Warden for the Town of Arlington.

Mr. Stevens announced that Bruce Whelple was beginning to tape record. A large portion of a tree on 88 Coolidge Road fell into the adjacent lot on Feb 26. The tree warden has inspected the trees and determined 2 trees should be removed because of disease and hazard Mr. Nyberg had the fallen wood removed from the neighbor's land on Feb 28, 2017 and placed on 88 Coolidge lot. Meeting participants and Commission members discussed the pros and cons of cutting the trees down and to what height. Mr. Kirby requested that they not have to file another Notice of Intent as they had one already pending.

Matthias Ritzkowski, neighbor at 165 Mt Vernon St., pointed out that thick branches have fallen twice in the past 5 years and an arborist has identified several dead trees. This indicates more than 2 trees are in potentially dangerous condition.

Megan Burns, next door neighbor, mentioned that her child and another child from the neighborhood were outside just prior to when the tree top fell off. There is also a steep slope, meaning branches and cut logs could roll onto their property from 88 Coolidge. She wondered if leaving 8-10' of the tree trunk will be safe.

Based on the opinion of the Tree Warden as to the dangerous condition of these trees, the steep slopes and the fact that these are non-natives, the Commission determined that the trees should be completely removed (flush cutting) with the following conditions:

- Tree removal shall be by hand and chainsaw,
- No heavy equipment on site,
- Cut and stump, no grubbing,
- Remove logs from existing trees offsite,
- Notify Conservation Commission of work within 24 hours of commencing.

Connors/JWhite motioned to issue an Emergency Certification; motion carried unanimously. Commission members signed the Emergency Certificate Form and Nathaniel Stevens will issue next day and send a copy to the DEP.

It will not be necessary for Mr. Nyberg to file an additional Notice of Intent for this work.

Update on Peer Reviewer: The Nobis contact has been signed by the Arlington Town Manager and Town Counsel. Ms. Coleman will scan the signature page and send to Nobis for signature; will also ask when Nobis can conduct a site visit.

There will be a kick-off meeting between Nobis and the Conservation Commission; the Commission will coordinate with neighbors, too.

Rick Kirby will email requesting continuance of the hearing to April 6.

9:30pm **Commission Updates:**

Land Stewards' Funds

Mr. White informed members that going into last year there was \$4872.29 in Stewards' Fund. \$250 was spent and \$340 received in contributions, leaving \$4962.29 at the end of 2016.

Ms. Chapnick asked if the Town could apply for some of that fund for part of the Mystic Riverfront Restoration planting in DCR land. Mr. White will check and respond.

Ms. Garnet will prepare a grant application for federal LWCA funds to supplement the funding approved by the Community Preservation Committee for the Spy Pond Restoration project. The grant will be for \$80k and will cover trails in the Arlington Boys and Girls Club and Scannel Field portions of the project only. She will work with Assistant Town Manager Jim Feeney on the application. Ms. Garnett feels that the fact that the trails must be ADA compliant makes this application tenuous.

Mr. Tirone met with Rick Vallarelli in the Building Department. Mr. Valarelli was pleased with the new Town maps that clearly show buffer zones around wetlands and waterways. It was agreed the Commission would request poster-sized versions for Ms. Coleman and for Mr. Valarelli and would request electronic links on the Town page, Conservation Commission page, and GIS to the plans.

JWhite/Nonni voted to approve the Wetland and Floodplain Overlay Map revision March 2, 2017. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Coleman, temporary Conservation Administrator